

Facts about the La Sal Mountains:

The La Sal mountains were formed millions of years ago when hot magma rose up under the sedimentary rocks, unsuccessfully trying to form a volcano, and then gradually cooling over time. The overlaying sedimentary rocks slowly eroded away leaving the igneous rock behind to form the laccolith mountains you see today. Glaciers also helped shape the higher areas when they carved the landscape. The Abajo Mtns. (to the south) and Henry Mtns. (to the west) were also formed in this way and are visible from the Loop Road on clear days.

Mining and ranching have played a large part in the history of the mountains. Gold was discovered at Miner's Basin and prospected from the late 1800s to about 1907, although only limited quantities were found along with copper and silver. Uranium was also mined in the La Sals. Ranching brought some of the earliest settlers to the area and ranchers are still allotted grazing rights today.

The La Sals are the most photographed mountain range in Utah, providing a dramatic background to the red rock mesas, buttes, and arches below.

Mt. Peale is the 4th highest peak in Utah at 12,721ft which along with the other peaks above 12,000 ft make the La Sals the 2nd highest mountain range in the state, offering challenging climbs to adventurous hikers.



Bull Canyon Dinosaur Tracks

For an added adventure, head a few miles off the Loop Road to see well preserved therapod tracks in an incredible location. Instead of heading left to Castle Valley from the Loop Rd, take a right at the stop sign at the intersection and head up the Gateway Rd (FS 207) for 5.4 miles. If coming from Castle Valley, just keep going straight past the Loop Rd turnoff. The site will be on the left about a half mile past the Fisher Mesa sign. There is a parking area, informational kiosk, and vault toilet.



A short walk from the parking area will lead you to the dinosaur tracks overlooking Fisher Mesa and Bull Canyon. These three-toed tracks were formed 200 million years ago in the Late Jurassic period by carnivorous dinosaurs when the area was a shallow sea. This Entrada Sandstone track-site is part of the Moab "Megatracksite" that preserves millions of tracks throughout the Moab area. Therapods are typically bipedal predators and the ones who made these tracks varied in size from medium to large. Other Moab tracks sites can be found on BLM land in Mill Canyon and on the Willow Springs Road.



La Sal Mountain Loop Road

Alpine Ridges & Panoramic Views to Red Rock Pinnacles



This paved scenic drive takes you through the majestic La Sal Mountains and returns to Moab along the scenic Colorado River. It will take about 2-3 hours to complete this drive. No services are available along the way. Bring all the food, water, gas, etc that you will need for a few hours. Please drive with caution as this is a narrow winding road with limited sight distance. Keep an eye out for wildlife and cattle. This drive is not suitable for large RVs or trailers as there are tight switchbacks.

**Manti- La Sal National Forest
Moab Ranger District**

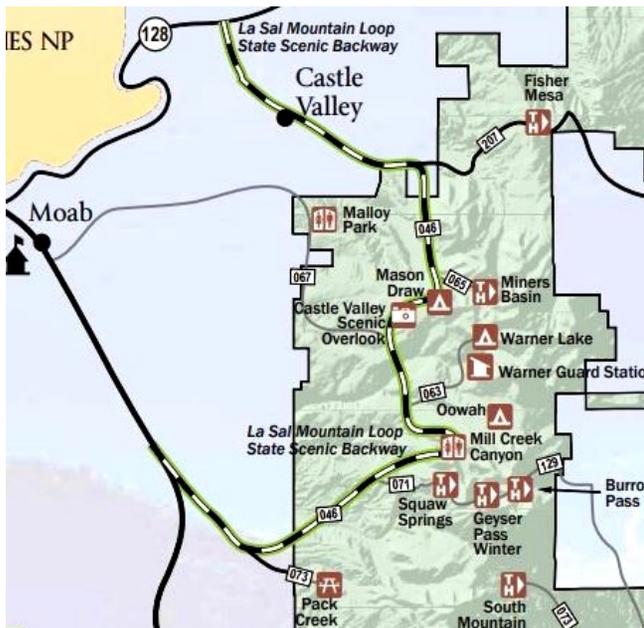
P.O. Box 386
62 E 100 N
Moab, UT 84532
Phone: 435-259-7155



La Sal Mountain Loop Road

Directions from Moab:

Head South on US 191 about 7.8 miles and take a left when you see the brown highway signs for Ken's Lake and the La Sal Mtn. Loop Road. At the next stop sign, take a right and continue driving up toward the mountains. You are now on the La Sal Mtn. Loop Road. Follow the narrow winding road up and over until you reach the stop sign on the other side. Take a left to continue through Castle Valley until you reach the intersection with Hwy 128. Take a left at the stop sign and follow the Colorado River back to Moab. Your final left to complete the loop will be at the stoplight at the end of Hwy 128 and will return you to US 191 and the town of Moab.



Spanish Valley Overlook

About 14.5 miles from Moab, this overlook lets you look down into the collapsed salt dome that formed the Spanish Valley & Moab landscape. South Mountain lies to the southeast while Mt. Mellenthin and Mt. Tukuhnivatz are prominent to the East. Mt. Mellenthin is named for an early Forest Service ranger killed in the line of duty in 1918 while Tukuhnivatz is an Ute word meaning 'The place where the sun sets last.'

Mill Creek & Horse Creek Canyon Overlook

Continuing along about 5.5 miles through pinyon pine & juniper trees to oak brush, fir & aspen groves, you will come to this overlook that lets you see down into Mill Creek Gorge. The gorge cuts through Entrada sandstone providing a popular rock climbing area in summer. There is a vault toilet available here.

Castle Valley Overlook

Keep going on the Loop Road another 7.5 miles and you will find this incredible stop that looks down into the 17 mile long Castle Valley. From here you can see to the valley floor including the Colorado River and the spectacular red rock mesas, buttes, and towers below. There is a vault toilet available here.



Off the La Sal Mountain Loop Road:

Pinhook Battlefield

Site of a skirmish between Native Americans and settlers in 1881. This 2 mile road requires higher clearance and/or 4 wheel drive.

Mason Draw Campground

Small 5 site campground with picnic tables, vault toilet, and fire rings.



Warner Lake

Hiking/Biking trails, fishing, campground, and day use picnic area. The 5.2 mile gravel road is suitable for cars.

Oowah Lake - Hiking trails, fishing, campground (tents only), and day use picnic area. The 3.2 mile



gravel road is suitable for cars.

Miners Basin

Rough and rutted 4-wheel drive road that ends 3 miles

in at a small pond and parking area. There is a short hike (3/4 mile one way) to the remains of a historic mining town at the end of the road.

Geyser Pass - Leads up and over the mountains. Likely requires higher clearance and/or AWD/4WD depending on the weather and season. Road closes for winter recreation from Dec 15-May 15.

Pack Creek Picnic Area

Day use only. Picnic area with tables, grills, and a vault toilet.